

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) today said he was “very disappointed” that House Democrats left him no choice but to vote against the National Defense Act Authorization for fiscal year 2011 by weighing the bill down with liberal policy goals, rather than focusing on providing troops on the ground with the support they need.

“Our men and women in uniform deserve better than this partisan exercise from the majority. The Defense authorization bill should be about giving our troops the support they need, not about pleasing liberal interest groups,” Rooney said. “This bill repeals ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ despite the Pentagon’s request for time to complete a review of the policy. The bill allows the Administration to transfer alleged terrorists from Guantanamo Bay into the United States. I’m very disappointed that House Democrats are passing their liberal wish list on the backs of troops on the ground.”

Rooney argued that wasteful spending in the bill, including funding for an extra engine for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, would have been better spent on equipment for troops on the ground or services for returning war fighters.

“Every dollar we waste on a broken extra engine that the Pentagon says it doesn’t want, doesn’t need and can’t afford is a dollar we won’t have to provide the equipment and resources that our troops and returning war fighters need,” Rooney said. “I am disappointed that the House rejected our bipartisan amendment to strike funding for the wasteful alternate engine program.”

Rooney continued to demand that the Department of Defense release the full report on its investigation into the Fort Hood Shooter, Nidal Malik Hasan, arguing that the bill should have required the Administration to release the full details of its report.

“The American people deserve to know the full findings of the Administration’s investigation into the Fort Hood shooting,” Rooney said. “Congress should exercise its power to end the Administration’s concealment of the restricted portion of this report because it may be politically embarrassing.”

Rooney is a member of the House Armed Services Committee. He served as Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas, prosecuting all civilian crimes on Fort Hood, TX, then taught the Laws of War and the Uniform Code of Military Justice at the United States Military Academy at West Point from 2002-04.

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